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Şarkiyat Enstitüsü, BOSNA-HERSEK

Bosna-Hersek dört asırdan uzun bir süre, Osmanlı hakimiyeti altında kalmıştır. Bu süreçte farklı konularda pek çok belge düzenlenmiştir. Elverişsiz koşullar, sistemli bir muhafazadan yoksun bulunması, ilk planda pek çok savaş ve diğer talihsizlikler, özellikle de yangınlar bu belge birikimini büyük ölçüde tahrip etmiştir. Döneme ait arşiv malzemesinin göreceli olarak küçük bir kısmı Bosna-Hersek sınırları içinde ancak muhafaza edilebilmiştir. İşte bu sebepledir ki; Bosna tarihiyle ilgili araştırmalar kaçınılmaz olarak Türkiye'deki Osmanlı Arşivlerine yönelmiştir. Bu arşivlerin muhtevası sayesinde, Bosna'nın tarihiyle alakalı olarak bahsedilen dönemi araştırmada tarih yazımı çok önemli sonuçlar elde etmiş bulunmaktadır. Yazar tebliğinde bu hususları ayrıntılı bir şekilde açıklamaya çalışmıştır.

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ظلت البوسنة والهرسك تحت حكم الدولة العثمانية لما يزيد عن أربعة قرون، وخلال هذا المسار وقع إعداد وثائق مختلفة المواضيع. وقد تعرض هذا الكم الوثائقي لخراب وتلف كبيرين نتيجة الظروف السيئة وعدم وجود آلية صيانة منتظمة ونتيجة للحروب المتعاقبة وغيرها من الكوارث التي أصابتها لا سيما الحرائق. وأمكن الحفاظ بشكل نسبي على جزء صغير من مواد الأرشيف للفترة المذكورة داخل حدود البوسنة والهرسك. ولهذا السبب، فإن الأبحاث المتعلقة بتاريخ البوسنة تحتاج حاجة ملحة إلى الأرشيفات العثمانية الموجودة في تركيا. وبفضل محتوى هذه الأرشيفات، أنتج المسار التدويني لتاريخ البوسنة في الفترة المذكورة نتائج هامة. وحاول الكاتب في ورقته توضيح هذه الخصوصيات بشكل مفصل.

THE IMPORTANCE OF OTTOMAN ARCHIVES IN THE STUDY OF HISTORY OF BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

In the millennium-long existence of the Bosnian state, the Ottoman administration occupies its greater part or, precisely, 415 years of rule, calculated as from the fall of mediaeval Bosnia (1463) until the occupation by Austria-Hungary (1878). However, some of Bosnia's areas had been taken by the Ottoman Empire's army leaders even prior to 1463. From the very beginning, as an ordered state with well organised administration in the conquered territories, it produced a large number of documents relevant to the operation of administration both in its Centre and in its provinces. That yielded an abundance of material which will later be used in research into many issues in the territories where that administration was established. This is why the preserved archival material which was created in the province and reached the capital, or reversely, has an exceptional value in the study of the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is possible to realise the importance thereof only when we grasp the potential which is, or was, at the disposal of Bosnia-Herzegovina's local institutions. Comparison between the available and the indispensably necessary shows not only insufficiency but also modesty of these funds. Reasons for this are manifold.

As the Empire's fringe province, Bosnia was frequently exposed to wars, devastation, especially at the time of the Ottoman Empire's power decline. This, along with frequent fires, took away huge amounts of documentation which had been accumulated in provincial institutions. It should be mentioned that in 1697, in Eugene of Savoy's campaign, Sarajevo was completely burned down, after which event the provincial authorities and administration were transferred to Travnik, where they stayed for about 150 years. After the seat of Bosnian valis – governors had been transferred from Travnik back to Sarajevo in the middle of the 19th century on the orders of Omer-pasha Latas, the vilayet – provincial archive was packed and sent to Istanbul[1]. Thus, relatively very little archival material was preserved on the soil of Bosnia, especially from the earlier period. Much better was the situation with the material originating from the end of the period. The archives of the last thirty years or so of the Ottoman rule (1851-1878) were preserved. The preserved fund of the vilayet archive contained about 200,000 documents[2].

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1 Hamdija Kreševljaković – Derviš M. Korkut, Travnik u prošlosti 1464-1878 [Travnik in the Past 1464-1878], Travnik 1961, p. 90

2 Lejla Gazić, Stradanje Orijentalnog instituta u agresiji na Bosnu i Hercegovinu 1992.-1995. [Losses suffered by the Institute for Oriental Studies in the aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina 1992-1995]

The aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995) is another proof to that historical doom. Most of what had not been destroyed in the past wars was destroyed in this one. Among the first aggressor's targets were the institutions housing the remaining historical memory - the Institute for Oriental Studies and the National and University Library.

What had been saved over the past centuries was later collected and deposited into museums, archives, and libraries. But, those attempts were rather belated. Many institutions where the remaining archival material was kept, with the exception of the Gazi Husrev-bey's Library (founded in 1537) and the National Museum (Sarajevo 1888), were founded after the Second World War: The Institute for Oriental Studies in Sarajevo, Academy of Arts and Sciences of Bosnia and Herzegovina, History Archives (Sarajevo), National and University Library, Archives of Herzegovina (Mostar), Archives of Bosanska Krajina (Banja Luka), Archives of Central Bosnia (Travnik) and Regional History Archives (Tuzla). Over the past period, these institutions collected the material and processed it scientifically. The overall funds of the preserved material collected by these institutions with respect to the funds needed to grasp the overall history of Bosnia, no matter how much they could seem to be sufficient at first glance, in terms of the number of institutions or their respective funds, are far from the needed. This does not aim to minimise their role and importance, or what they have preserved; on the contrary, this makes them even more valuable. Nevertheless, this is still insufficient to achieve significant scientific results.

This is why the study of and objective insight into the social and historical processes in Bosnia and Herzegovina were inevitably oriented to research in the archives of the Republic of Turkey housing rich materials from the Ottoman period relating to Bosnia and Herzegovina as a province of exceptional relevance for the Empire, as well as for the province in which that administration had some specific features compared with other provinces. Additionally, it lasted longer than in many areas of the European part of the Ottoman Empire.

Before the investigation started in the Ottoman archives in Turkey, the only two institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the Ottoman archival material was studied, were the National Museum in Sarajevo and Gazi Husrev-bey's Library. The Library had already had significant funds, whereas the Museum started collecting only after its foundation at the end of the 19th century. At the Museum, the "Turkish Archive" was established from the collected material, which would serve as a basis for the development of modern Bosnia-Herzegovina Ottoman studies. The other abovementioned institutions are much newer and they only later joined these developments.

The National Museum was a pioneer in the evaluation of that material. It pooled human resources and potentials with prerequisites for the study of the archival material of

Ottoman origin. It was in the National Museum's "Turkish Archive" that the founders, the major implementers of modern Ottoman studies and historiography - Branislav Durdev, Nedim Filipović, Hazim Šabanović, and Hamid Hadžibegić, started their professional and scientific careers. Although the real development of research undertakings in the Ottoman archives started immediately upon the Second World War, their roots are somewhat earlier, approximately a decade prior to the beginning of that tragic war. For this reason, hereunder we would like to point to some important events which affected and defined the course of this development.

Beginning of research in Ottoman archives

The initial archival research by Bosnia-Herzegovina experts, seen from today's time distance, seems to have happened rather late. Here we have to bear in mind human and financial difficulties, then the overall historical and political environment as relevant prerequisites for the beginning of such activity. Ottoman archives had been rather closed for a long time, and only rare ones were fortunate enough and privileged to do research therein. In the forefront were the Hungarians who back in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were granted permission and started work in archives and libraries in Istanbul, which yielded noticeable success. Hungary's Academy of Sciences very soon published the results of that research, thus making a great leap in the study of the history of Hungary from the period of Ottoman rule[3].

Although some scientists had been there earlier, Imre Karacson (1907-1911) was the first to begin systematic work in the Topkapi Saray archive. He aroused interest in the work in archives in Turkey itself, so the Turkish government sent an invitation to Adolf Deissmann, the then Berlin University professor to survey and catalogue non-Islamic manuscripts in the Topkapi Saray from the legacy in the library of Mehmed II (1451-1481). He completed the task in the autumn of 1929. Back then some of the articles about the wealth of libraries and archives captured significant attention and curiosity in Europe. All that aroused a great interest also in Yugoslavia, whose constituent part was Bosnia and Herzegovina[4].

It is for this reason that the making of an agreement between Yugoslavia and Turkey in 1929, including also the provision for the access of Yugoslav researchers to archives and libraries, was looked forward to. Some of the media brought headlines like: "Will the history of our Middle Ages be changed by Istanbul documents?" or "Our history

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[3] Fehim Bajraktarević, "Glavni carigradski arhiv i spisi iz njega" [The main Istanbul archive and documents therein] in Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju i istoriju jugoslovenskih naroda pod turskom vladavinom, VI-VII/1956-57, Sarajevo 1958, p. 283

[4] Ibid., p. 284

science gets a new field of activity". Both headlines fully reflect what would be taking place later as a result of the archive research[5].

A few years after the agreement had been signed, a three-member delegation of the Academy of Sciences from Belgrade[6] set out for a fortnight's research (8-24 April, 1936) with an aim to get insight at least into a summary content of the archive material in Istanbul. A deficiency of inventory books and catalogues slowed their work down, whereas the short time at their disposal was an additional difficulty. Because of this they were limited to the work on defters – Ottoman public records related to decisions made by the Divan (Muhime defteri)[7].

Another important event in the future work was Branislav Durdev's visit to Istanbul, where he did graduate studies at the Faculty of Literature (Edebiyat fakultesi) as a Turkish government's fellow. Professor Ismail Hakki Uzunçarşılı gave him not only the proper guidelines, but he also helped him with getting a licence to work in the Archive, which was still rather difficult. Entering the Archive for him was a revolutionary discovery. Actually, with the help of Uzunçarşılı, he found two documents related to the matter he was interested in, which no one used ever since they had been recorded. Having returned home, he published first communications about the existence of those public records, which, at the same time, was the first communication to scientific circles about the existence thereof[8]. But, the then Yugoslav government shortly refused him this privilege, so that he had to stop his study visit to Istanbul and return to the country. After that, in 1939, he got the position of a curator – archivist in the National Museum in Sarajevo and started to publish parts from the content of those public records in journals in Monte Negro, since the material he had discovered related to Monte Negro.

The Second World War thwarted further plans, possibilities for cooperation and new research in Ottoman archives. B. Durdev's return to Sarajevo after the war enabled the continuation of publishing documents and copies he had made during his earlier visit. After the Second World War, several documents and studies were published in the Herald

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5 Ibid., pp 284-285

6 Delegation was made up of: Fehim Bajraktarević, Gliša Elezović, and Stanoje Stanojević.

7 Stanoje Stanojević, "Carigradski arhivi" [The Constantinople Archives] in Jugoslovenski istorijski časopis II/1936, pp 414-420; Gliša Elezović, Iz carigradskih turskih arhiva [From the Constantinople Turkish archives] – Muhime defteri, Beograd 1950, pp 3-18.

8 Branislav Durdev, "Još nešto o carigradskom arhivu" [Something else about the Constantinople Archive] in Jugoslovenski istorijski časopis V, 1-2/1939, p.37; Ibid., "Predgovor" [Preface], Dva defiera Crne Gore iz vremena Skender-bega Crnojevića (sv.I) [Two Monte Negro public records from the time of Skendr-bey Crnojević](vol. I) ANU BiH, Special Editions, Book IX/1, Department of Liberal Arts, Book 2/1, Sarajevo 1968, pp 1-16.

of the National Museum (GZM)[9]. A need arouse to found an institution which would be autonomous in this work and which would be able to design and independently plan further activities in this field. The rich manuscript and archive material collected by the National Museum over decades served as a basis for the establishment of the new institution, which would deal exclusively with collecting and studying manuscripts and archive materials from the Ottoman period. In 1950, the Institute for Oriental Studies was founded for this purpose in Sarajevo. Of such tasks, the most important certainly was the study of general and cultural history of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the period of Ottoman rule and collecting material for this purpose beyond its territory. This event marked a new era concerning cooperation and possibilities of studying Ottoman archive material, especially research in the archives of Istanbul and towns in Turkey.

Another visit of Branislav Durdev to the Ottoman Archive followed immediately upon the foundation of the Institute for Oriental Studies. In 1951 (September-October), he went to the Ottoman Archive and made a plan for collecting archival material from Ottoman archives. According to his plan, a team of our experts went there in the summer of 1952 with a task to collect the planned archival material and start its systematic studying, translating and publishing. Since then until the aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992, archival material was continually and systematically collected, not only from archives in Turkey, but also from other centres possessing materials of Ottoman origin. Owing to this fact, the Institute for Oriental Studies established itself as a leading institution of this type in the former Yugoslavia; it also acquired an enviable reputation in the regional and even world context. The Institute together with the entire archival material ceded to it by the National Museum, including the aforesaid Vilayet Archive, as well as the original material painfully collected over decades and photocopied and micro-filmed materials, was set on fire by the aggressor and thus destroyed with all its funds and collections at the very beginning of the barbarian campaign against Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995). There was only one reason for this – to kill the truth about Bosnia and Herzegovina and about its past.

Some features of the research in Turkish archives

Our experts' first visits to the Ottoman Archive and their research announced a major breakthrough in historiography. When Branislav Durdev's doctoral thesis (defended in Belgrade on 10 May 1952) appeared under the title of "What the Turkish rule was like in Monte Negro in the 16th and 17th centuries", founded primarily on

[9] B. Durdev, "Požeška kanun-nama iz 1545. godine" [The Požega kanun-nama from 1545] in GZM, NS I/1946 (1946), pp 129-138; "O vojnicima, sa osvrtom na razvoj turskog feudalizma i na pitanje bosanskog agaluka" [About soldiers, with a review of the development of Turkish feudal system and the issue of Bosnian agalik" in GZM, NS II/1947 (1947), pp 75-137; "Kanun-nama bosanskog sandžaka iz godine 1530" [The Bosnian sanjak kanun-nama from 1530] in GZM, NS III/1948 (1948), pp 189-200.

Ottoman archival material, it aroused heated polemic discussions, especially after its publication in 1953. True to the results of historiography and due to their ignorance of Ottoman archival material, some members of the Board expressed open doubts about the candidate's theses, claiming they would not be maintainable, doubting even the authenticity of the sources they were based on. Such scepticism is incredible but somehow understandable. It hid a fear of redefining certain issues as hypothetically announced by papers immediately upon the signing of the 1929 agreement. Because of this and other obstacles made in the Serbian Academy of Sciences when it came to the publication of his thesis, B. Durdev decided to publish it in Sarajevo. Despite the facsimiles of sources which seemed disputable to the Board, the publication of the thesis for a long time was the subject of criticism by certain circles from Belgrade and scientific polemics, which, nevertheless, did not succeed in diminishing the importance of the work. Further investigation only reinforced the theses brought up in the dissertation[10]. We point out this example as an illustration as to what extent the insight into the Turkish archival material could change and shift certain historiographic views and how they were sometimes faced.

Access to Ottoman archives was invaluable for the study of Bosnian history. Within a short period of time, several major works of Bosnia's historiography[11] were written, which before that had been unimaginable. The research carried out by then had been based on a modest fund of archival material preserved with us in some institutions or in archives of the neighbouring countries, of Dubrovnik first of all, as well as in other archives in Bosnia's immediate neighbourhood. Irrespective of how much immediate information is offered to us by other archives, it is insufficient for all the specificities of historical events, processes, social and other developments to be seen. It is for this reason, despite occasional challenges and minimising of the importance of archival material of Ottoman origin, it seems unavoidable and of key importance in many very important issues from the history of Bosnia.

Although no other historical period has left such deep imprints and visible traces in the history of Bosnia, both in the sphere of material and spiritual cultures, as did the Ottoman, it was the least investigated period of Bosnia's history until the research carried out in Ottoman archives. Only rare ones dared to engage in some problems, acting within rare institutions or on their own initiative. Earlier attempts to make certain issues topical,

[10] B. Durdev, "Predgovor" [Preface], "Turska vlast u Crnoj Gori u XVI i XVII veku [Turkish Rule in Monte Negro in the 16th and 17th centuries], Svjetlost Sarajevo 1953, pp 7-10.

[11] Avdo Sućeska, "Osnovni rezultati poslijeratne bosanskohercegovačke istoriografije o osmansko-turskom periodu i njeni dalji zadaci" [Basic results of the post-war Bosnian-Herzegovinian historiography about the Ottoman-Turkish period and its further tasks], Cnsultations on the historiography of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1945-1982), ANUBiH, Special editions, Book LXV, Depratment of Liberal Arts, Book 12, Sarajevo 1983, pp 37-53.

which were believed to be important for the history of Bosnia, remained without good and final answers. Despite all the endeavours and the sincerest intentions of the researchers, and despite a couple of even successful attempts, modest results were yielded in terms of both topics and content due to the lack of adequate archival material. However, credit is due to them for having made these issues topical, incited later investigation and laid a basis for further work.

We will briefly summarise and give a general outline of some big issues which were successfully resolved on the basis of Ottoman archives: the agrarian issue, Ottoman feudal system, the issue of the spread of Islam, migrations, position of peasantry, establishment and organisation of provincial authority in Bosnia, emergence and development of town settlements in Bosnia[12]. Equally successfully resolved were the problems from social, political, military, economic, and cultural history. We would like to emphasise that the access to the Ottoman archival material also helped and still helps significantly to resolve some questions concerning the Bosnian Middle Ages. Ottoman inventory defters from the 15th century, and later as well, offer unsurmised possibilities of exploitation, study of economy and demographic shifts. They bring us significantly closer to the completely unknown Middle Ages of some regions. So, if from mediaeval written sources we learnt about four villages in the Travnik immediate surroundings, i.e., only about their names without any other information, and if the first census of the Bosnian sanjak from 1468 alone enumerated some fifty villages by name, along with other information such as the number of households, economic potential, then we can claim that there are no written sources which by their overall content, capacity and importance could be compared to these defters, which offer so much in one single place. The same goes for other regions. Their importance, therefore, cannot be limited only to the period of the Ottoman Empire's official administration, but they are particularly important for the earlier period of Bosnian history as well. Another very important feature is that they give a good insight into broader areas, e.g., the whole of the sanjak. It is difficult to enumerate thematically or individually all the results gained on the basis of the Ottoman archival material in the study of history of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but in conclusion we would like to point out a few general advantages offered by Ottoman archives:

— they open a new aspect of looking at historical developments,

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[12] A. Sućeska, "Osnovni rezultati poslijeratne bosanskohercegovačke istoriografije o osmansko-turskom periodu i njeni dalji zadaci" [Basic results of the postwar Bosnian-Herzegovinain historiography about the Ottoman-Turkish period and its further tasks], pp 37-53; Enes Pelidija, "Osnovni rezultati bosanskohercegovačke historiografije osmanskog perioda (od 1463. do kraja XVIII stoljeća) u posljednje dvije decenije XX stoljeća" [Basic results of the postwar Bosnian-Herzegovinain historiography of the Ottoman period (1463- end of 18th century) in the last two decades of the 20th century] in Prilozi, Institut za istoriju, 29, sarajevo 2000, pp 89-109; Ahmed Aličić, "Historiografska literatura koja se odnosi na historiju Bosne i Hercegovine u 19. stoljeću" [Historiographic literature related to the history of Bosnia and Herzegovna in the 19th century] in Prilozi, Institut za istoriju, 29, Sarajevo 2000, pp 111-116.

— they make it possible to actualise a large number of new issues which are impossible to resolve on the basis of other archival material,

— they offer possibilities to study a broad time period in continuity,

—they significantly contributed to the development of Bosnian-Herzegovinian historiography.

The role and importance of Ottoman archives is immeasurable, especially today when with the destruction of the Institute for Oriental Studies Bosnia and Herzegovina was left without the major part of its archival treasure saved after many misfortunes over the past centuries.